1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV2
Burusho AV7

CHAPTER XX.

DÀRDISTÀN: COUNTRIES AROUND GILGIT.

FRAGMENTS of information got from hearsay of countries that are inaccessible to one, when they can be verified by comparison, are not without value. I will therefore put down a few notes, which, as far as they go, are likely to be correct, on those parts of Dárdistán which cannot at present be reached by Europeans.

But first I will show, in a tabular form, the several divisions of Dárdistán which have in any way come within my notice, including those which have already been treated of. These divisions are in some cases separate valleys, in other cases parts of the same valley. The Table includes a statement of their form of government, of the races or castes that inhabit them, and of the sect or religion prevailing, as well as the practice that may hold as regards slavery.

DÀRDISTÀN.

	Government.	Prevailing Races or Castes.	Religion.	Condition as regards Slavery.
Gilgit ..	Governed directly by the Maharaja's officers.	A few Ronú; more Shin; most Yashkun.	Half Sunì, half Shia.	In these neither is there now, nor was there of old, either slavery or slave-trade.
Sa		Shin and Yashkun	Mostly Sunì; a few Shia.	
Harammuk		Shin and Yashkun	Shia.	
Hanuza ..		Shin and Yashkun	Sunì.	
Punia ..	Ruled by Raja Tai Hugder, in dependence on the Maharaja. (Raja's caste or family is called Burshe.)	Yashkun	Mohl; and a few Sunì.	
Nagar ..	Ruled by Raja Zafar. (Raja's family, Mogulain.)	Yashkun	All Shia.	

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
Burusho AV7

D
131
642
563
564
567
795

DÎRDISTÂN—*continued.*

	Government.	Prevailing Races or Castes.	Religion.	Condition as regards Slavery.
HUNZA ..	Ruled by Raja Ghazan Khân, son of Ghazanfar. (Raja's family, Ayeshia.)	Yashkun	All Molâi.	
ISHKOMAN, or CHATARSUN	Belongs to Yâsin	Yashkun	Molâi.	
YÂSIN ..	Ruled by Raja Mir Wali, son of Gaur Rahmân. (Raja's family, Bakhte.)	Yashkun	Molâi and Sunî, the former predominating; no Shia.	Here slaves are both kept and dealt in.
CHITRÂL and MASTÛJ.	Ruled by Raja Imâd-ul-Mulk. (Raja's family, Katorî.)	Yashkun	Sunî.	
GOLÂI in BADAKHSHÂN	Dependent on the Mîr or Prince of Badakhshân (tributary to Kâbul).	Wâkhik*	Molâi.	
DÎREL ..	Republic	Shîn and Yashkun	Sunî.	In these, captives of war are kept as slaves; slave-dealing is not practised.
TANGÎR ..	Republic	Shîn and Yashkun		
GOR	Republic	Shîn and Yashkun	Sunî.	
THALICHA ..	Republic.			
CHILÂS ..	Republic	Shîn and Yashkun		
KOLÎ	Republic	Shîn and Yashkun		
PÂLUS ..	Republic	Shîn and Yashkun		

B
101
31
643

The first five divisions I have already treated of as fully as I was able. We now come to the countries that surround Gilgit.

Nagar lies along the left bank of the Hunza-Nagar River, having Hunza opposite on the right bank. Since about 1867 it has paid a small tribute to the Maharaja, receiving in return a present of larger value; this cannot be considered more than a compliment, and a mark of desire for friendly relations.

The people of Nagar are called Khajanî.

B
648

Hunza is a more warlike country than Nagar. As shown in the last chapter, it has often been actively at enmity with the Maharaja, and it has generally been in a state of unfriendliness to him. In 1870 the Hunza Raja sent an agent to Sirînagar to open friendly relations, who was well received; I do not know

* I have never met any of these people, but I believe them to be Dârds. Golje is another name by which they are called; that is the territorial name, while Wâkhik is the caste name.

district. The Dumns are found in all districts of the Jammu Province, the highest number being in the Jammu district. The Gaddi predominates in the Jammu district. The Jolahas are confined to Riasi district. The Megha are most numerous in the Jammu and Udhampur districts. The Batals are generally found in Udhampur and Riasi districts. The Watal which is only another name for Chuhra are found in Srinagar district only where also they represent immigrants.

K 564

233. Variation in the Strength of Certain Castes.—Subsidiary Table I contains figures of population of certain depressed castes for the last four Censuses and though the population includes non-Hindu members of the castes as well, they are so few that the main results are not affected. The Barwalas show a decline of 32·4 per cent. during 1921-1931. They decreased in the previous decade 1911-1921 also by 25·6 per cent. Their community is thus losing in numbers. The Chamars show an increase of 5·4 per cent. which is far below the general increase in the entire population of the State during the decade 1921-1931. The Doms reveal an increase of 12·1 which shows that the community is progressing satisfactorily. The Meghs who form the important caste have gone down in strength by 11·2 per cent. Compared to their population in 1921 the Barwalas register an increase of 108·1, the Chamars a negligible one of 11·4 per cent., the Doms show an unhappy decrease of 37 per cent. and the Meghs an increase of 17·6 per cent.; the decrease in some of these castes is due to the reclamation of some of their members by Arya Samaj and their consequent return under the new name 'Arya'.

K 161 564

234. Criminal Tribes.—Pernas and Sansis are the only tribes treated as criminal in the State and the ban has recently been removed from the Bakarwals as a temporary measure subject to their good behaviour in future. The number of Pernas and Sansis in the State is only insignificant as the former number 42 and the latter 134 only. Pernas constitute a floating community who generally live by dancing and singing and have loose morals, while Sansis are adepts in housebreaking.

K 162 563

235. Primitive Tribes.—Shins and Yashkuns are the only two castes considered to be primitive though the Political Agent, Gilgit is inclined to class all the castes inhabiting the Agency under this head. The Shins are said to have descended from Hindus and do not drink cow's milk to the present day. These castes are mainly devoted to agriculture and have begun to come in contact with the outside world which is bringing about a change in their mode of living. Some aspects of their life as depicted by the Political Agent, Gilgit (in response to the questionnaire issued), where the tribes live a life more of their own than in the Gilgit district administered by the State, are given below and will be found of interest :—

D 564

PART "A".

1. The tribes are not divided into different exogamous groups.

2. The people in the Agency are divided into various groups, details of which are given below :—

B [564]

(a) *Ronus.*—The most honoured caste exist in small numbers in Nagar, Gilgit and Punial, and become more numerous as one travels Westwards towards Yasin and Chitral.

They have two theories as to their origin :—one that they are descended from Samalik, a former ruler in Mastuj ; the other that they are of Arab blood and descendants of Mohammad Hanifa, son of Ali who was son-in-law of the Prophet.

(b) *Shins.*—The next most senior division are of Hindu origin and established themselves by conquest from the South. They consider themselves the aristocracy of the country, although they can show nothing to substantiate their claims. They are now Mohammedans but perverted relics of Hinduism are still shown by their aversion from anything which is connected with cows or fowls.

6-India G-3 (7555)1933 AVI Kashmir
Dard A43
Burusho AV7

B
[564]

(c) *Yashkun*—The most numerous of the lot—come next in importance and form almost the entire population of Hunza, Nagar and Punial; they also outnumber all other classes in the rest of the Agency. They are of Turanian origin but intermarriage with people of Tartar and Aryan descent has obliterated most of their original characteristics.

D
564

(d) *Saiyids*—Who are thinly scattered through the Agency, declare that they first settled in the country when Tamerlane was king. They are greatly respected by all classes and receive the daughters of the ruling families in marriage. The daughter of a Saiyid usually can marry only in the same class. Occasionally, however, they are married by kings and ruling chiefs, and also, in this district, by Akhoons and Mullahs.

B
[564]

(e) *Kamins, Doms and Shins*—They are of an inferior caste. The Kamins who do not exist in Hunza and Nagar are millers and potters and are most numerous in Darel and Chilas. The Doms who are musicians, blacksmiths and cobblers, are found mostly in Yasin, Nagar and Chilas. The Shins are leather workers and exist only in Nagar.

(f) *Kashmiris*—Form the largest section of the population in Gilgit proper. They settled in the time of Ahmad Shah (about 1780) and are mostly weavers, goldsmiths and carpenters.

(g) *Gujjars*—Nomadic cattle owners form a floating population chiefly in the highlands separating Gilgit from the condominium territory of Tangir and Darel.

D
105

3. A chief comes from the uppermost class and usually marries only one wife from that class the children of the union being recognised as heirs, to the exclusion of children by a wife of an inferior class.

B
105

4. The organization is autocratic in theory, in practice any important point is settled by a Jirga of headmen.

5. The origin of the tribes in the Gilgit Agency is conjectural. There would appear to have been three main movements—an incursion from the North as the inhabitants of Badakshan gradually expanded over the Hindu Kush; an invasion of the Shins from the South and the conquest by the Tartars from the East. There is also evidence that Tibet ruled in this part of the country for many generations.

Owing to the inaccessibility of the country, Hunza and Nagar seem to have been less affected by these movements than the rest of the Agency, and among the people living in the more isolated parts of these provinces, traces of Turanian descent can still be seen.

6. Most of the inhabitants are cultivators and all three types of cultivation are to be observed, depending entirely on the conformation of the ground. In hilly country terraced fields, often revetted with stones, are the rule: where the country is open and flat ordinary plots are made.

Irrigation is carried out almost universally by water kahls, some of which extend along the precipitous faces of the mountains for many miles. Where possible small canals are hewn out of the rock; where the hill is too steep the water is conducted through hollowed tree trunks which are propped by wooden supports.

7. There are no megalithic monuments in the Agency.

Two Buddhist Stupas exist; one on the hillside about three miles east of Gilgit; the other on the road to Nagar, between Chalt and Minapin. There

Mr Biddulph C-3 (1873-1878) 1880 Afgh-Afghanistan-Afgh

covered with orchards of fruit trees. The cultivation is extremely good, and fruit of all kinds grows in abundance.

Mahommedanism sits but loosely on the Hunza people, who make no secret of their preference for easy-going tenets. Though professing to be Maulais, they are disowned by their own Pirs, who refuse to visit the country, and no contributions are sent by them to their spiritual chief. They are great wine-drinkers, and are reproached by their neighbours for their readiness to eat unorthodox food,[1] and for the immorality of their women. Firearms are scarce, and bows and arrows are still not quite obsolete.

The people of Hunza and Nager belong to the caste called Yeshkun by the Shina, but amongst themselves known as Boorish. They differ slightly in appearance, the Nager people apparently showing an infusion of Tartar blood, derived, no doubt, from their Iskardo neighbours. The Hunza people, who are a somewhat taller race, have finer features and are distinguished for being more deliberate and less vivacious in their actions. The language, called Boorishki or Boorishaski, is identical in both states; the Hunza pronunciation being rather more broad and drawling than that of Nager. This language was first published by Dr. Leitner. All their songs, however, are in Shina,—a language which is supposed to lend itself more readily to poetry,—and Shina songs are sung by men who do not understand a word of that language.

Both Thums are still addressed as Soori, as a title of respect. This appears to be the same as *Sri*, an appellation of Lakshmi, the Hindoo goddess of wealth, commonly prefixed to the names of Hindoo princes in India, to denote their honour and prosperity. The Thum's wives are styled "*gánish*," which is almost identical with the original Sanscrit word for mother, and their sons are called "*gushpur*." In cutting the throat of an animal for food, the people of Hunza make a practice of turning it towards the Thum's abode, even when many miles distant, instead of in the orthodox direction of Mecca.

Every village, according to its size, possesses one or more forts, sufficient to give shelter to the whole population. These are built of sun-dried bricks, with walls 15 feet high, and square towers at intervals of 20 yards. At night the whole population takes refuge within the walls. Similar forts exist in Gilgit, but under Cashmere rule they have fallen into disuse.

In Hunza there is a tradition preserved of the occurrence

[1] Animals not slaughtered according to the manner prescribed by Mahommedan law.

Biddulph G-8 (1873-1878) 1880 A63 Afghanistan A63
42: A63 Dard A63
Burushq AV7

CHAPTER III.

CASTES—ADMINISTRATION.

D
564
B
564

DR. LEITNER and Mr. Drew have already shown that the people of Gilgit and some of the adjacent valleys are divided into castes, which are governed by strict laws as to intermarriage. The distribution of the different castes, as shown roughly in the following table, may help to give some clue to their different origins:—

Table showing Distribution of Castes.

	Yeomen, Landed or Thakurs.	Shin.	Dumbish or Yeshkun.	Kremmin, Dom, Dhum, and Ustad.	Remarks.
Ghilghit	None	34 per cent.	4 per cent.	14 per cent.	Exclusive of Nomenclature, but including under the head of Shins, Chilas, Gebirs, Mahrons, and Shinwallis.
Punial	5 "	50 "	40 "	10 "	
Punial and Sai	5 "	50 "	None	10 "	
Darkoty and Kandia	5 "	50 "	40 per cent.	5 "	
Kandia, Sazin	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Yasin	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	Exclusive of Pshawns and Gangers.
Gupis	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Punial	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Ghizr	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Ghizr	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Gilgit	6 per cent.	50 "	40 "	4 "	Exclusive of Cashmeris and recent immigrants.
Nagar	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Hunza	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Punial	5 "	50 "	40 "	5 "	
Wershigoom	5 per cent. A few families.	None	Greater part of the population.	A few families.	Exclusive of the ruling class.
Main valley above Punial to Chushi	None	33 per cent.	50 per cent.	13 per cent.	
Chitral Valley	500 families	None	None	500 families	Exclusive of the regular population of Chitral.

At the risk of going over some ground that has already been traversed, a few remarks concerning them may not be out of place.

The most honoured caste is that of the Ronos, who rank next to the ruling family in every country in which they

Bidulph C-8 (1873-1878) 1880 Afgh-Afghanistan-NWF
4: Av3 Dard Av3
Burushe Av7

are found. The Wuzeers are generally, though not always, chosen from among the Rono families. They exist in small numbers in Nager, Gilgit, and Ponyal, gradually increasing in numbers as one travels westward through Yassin, Mastooch, and Chitral, in which places there are said to be altogether over 300 families. In Nager and Yassin they call themselves Hara and Haraiyo,[1] and in Chitral Zundra, but they claim to be all of the same stock. Some exist in Wakhan and Sirikol, where they are called Khaibar-khatar; and in Shighnan, where they are called Gaibalik-khatar. Wherever they exist they are held in great respect. They have two principal traditions concerning their origin, both of which may contain a germ of truth. One is that they are descended from three brothers, Zoon, Rono, and Harai, the sons of a certain Soomalik who ruled in Mastooch before the establishment of the Shahreis line. The other is that they are of Arab blood, and descended from Mahommed Hanifa, the son of Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law. Their small numbers, general distribution, and the universal estimation in which they are held, are evidence in favour of the first assertion, and it is possible that they may be descended from Arabs who settled in the upper part of the Chitral Valley at the time of the Arab conquest of Badakhshan, at the end of the seventh century. A claim to Arab descent is, however, very common among many sections of the inhabitants of these valleys, but it seems to rest on no real foundation. According to another version they came originally from Rajauri, near Poonch, and are descended from three brothers, Sirung, Sooroong, and Kunger Pûtool.

In appearance they are generally taller than the other inhabitants of the country, with rather high cheek bones, oval faces not thickly bearded, and fairly developed features. Some of them resemble in feature high-class Rajpoots. The esteem in which they are held is proved by the fact that they are able to give their daughters in marriage to the ruling families, and children born of such marriages are qualified to succeed to all the honours of the father's family, and intermarry with other ruling families. They also give daughters in marriage to Syuds, of whom there are a few scattered about the country, but not to the inferior castes. They, however, take daughters in marriage from both Shins and Yeshkuns. Children born of these unions rank as Ronos, and, if daughters, can, as above stated, intermarry with ruling families. The Zundré of Chitral do not refuse their daughters to the Afghans of Dir. Excep-

[Members of the Rono caste — Analyst]

[1] This name recalls the Haroyu of the Zendaveста.

4 Avs Dard Avs Kuresha Avs

by them, not a single fowl is to be seen. These peculiarities are strictly confined to the Shin caste, and, together with other customs which will come under notice presently, afford good grounds for supposing that they were a race of Hindoos who came from the south, and, pressing up the Indus Valley, established a Hindoo state in these remote regions under the crest of the Hindoo Koosh.

The next in order and the most numerous caste are the Yeshkuns, who form the entire population of Hunza, Nager, and Ponyal, and nearly all the population of Yassin, besides being numerically superior in Gilgit, Sai, Darel, and Astor. In Hunza and Nager they do not call themselves Yeshkun, but Boorish; and in Yassin, Woorshik and Boorisho. The language spoken, in slightly varying dialects, in these three states is known as Boorishki, Boorishaski, or Woorishki. The term "Khajoona," applied by the Gilgitis to the language as spoken in Nager, is never used in that country, and the old name also lingers in Yassin, which is still known as Woorshigoom. This language, of which an account is given in Appendix A, differs markedly from all languages in the neighbouring valleys. It has, I believe, been pronounced on good authority to belong to the Turanian family of languages.

In the colder climate of Hunza and Yassin, the people of this caste have ruddy complexions, and fair and even red hair is not uncommon. The Boorish of Nager show a somewhat different type. Many of them are short, thick-set men, with prominent cheek-bones, thick features, and thin beards. These characteristics, joined to their unwarlike nature, are probably due to an infusion of Tartar blood from Iskardo, gained during the time that Nager was subject to the Makpon ruler of Iskardo. If the Boorish are originally of Turanian origin, they have received at some time so large an infusion of Aryan blood as to have almost entirely swamped their original characteristics. Mr. Drew points out that the restrictions on their intermarriage with the Shins makes them the purer race of the two, and though these restrictions are not always closely observed, the Yeshkuns of Hunza and Nager would have little opportunity for profiting by their non-observance, so that their dash of Aryan blood must have been obtained before the appearance of the Shins. There does not appear to be any good foundation for Dr. Leitner's suggestion that the Yeshkuns are probably the product of intermarriage between the Shins and some aboriginal race. Considerable rivalry exists between the Shins and Yeshkuns,

[illegible] G-2 (1873-1879) 1880 Afg-Afghanistan XIII-
4
AV3 Dard AV3
Burusho AV7

D 578
Considerable rivalry exists between Shins and Yeshkuns B 578
even in villages where they have lived side by side for generations.

Living among them, in varying numbers, are Syuds, Krammins, Doms, Shotos, and Goojurs. All of these occupy an inferior position except the Syuds, who relate that they first settled in the country in the time of Tamerlane. They are treated with the highest respect, and receive in marriage daughters from the ruling families, but without reciprocity, for a Syud's daughter is given only to a Syud. There are none in Hunza, but elsewhere they are scattered through the country in small numbers. There is seldom more than one Syud's house in each village. D 564 B 564

The Krammins, who are millers and potters, are most numerous in Darel, and do not exist in Hunza or Nager. They do not intermarry with any other caste. Their name is probably derived from the Persian *kamin*, "mean," though Mr. Shaw, in his paper on "Stray Aryans in Thibet," suggests that the name is derived from *kram*, "work."

The Doms, who are musicians, blacksmiths, and leather-workers, are most numerous in Yassin, Nager, and Chilas, in which latter place they form a sixth of the population.

In Nager there is a caste called Shoto, which exists nowhere else; they work in leather, and rank below the Doms, who take daughters from them without giving in return.

Like the low caste of men of India, the men belonging to these inferior castes are of very dark complexion, coarse features, and inferior physique. Mr. Drew regards them as akin to the low castes of the Punjab, and accounts for their presence in these countries by suggesting that they are remnants of a pre-Aryan aboriginal race, who represent the earliest inhabitants of these valleys. I am more inclined to think that, like the Shins, they have come from the south to settle in these valleys. It is possible that they accompanied the Shins, or they may have followed them, gradually spreading under the protection of the Shin rule. Their status is only consistent with the existence of the Hindoo religion, which I believe to have been introduced by the Shins, and it is worthy of notice that they are not found in the upper part of the Chitral Valley. D 142 174 B 142 174

In Gilgit itself there are a great number of Cashmeris, or, as they are called, Kashiroos, whose forefathers settled in the place in the time of Ahmed Shah Abdali, about 1760 A.D. They now form the largest section of the population, and the shrewdness which forms so distinctive a part of the D 162